News & Views

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Gene Find May Help Slow Decline in Kidney Disease

By Tammy Eyler

Recent findings by an NCI-Frederick collaboration illustrate the potential of personalized screening and treatment for chronic kidney disease and may lead to new approaches for slowing its progression to end-stage kidney disease.

The researchers identified common variants in the *MYH9* gene that can predict nondiabetic-kidney disease in African Americans. Collaborators included the National Institutes for Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Disease (NIDDK); and NCI-Frederick researchers in the Human Genetics Section, Basic Science Program; and the Laboratory of Genomic Diversity, Center for Cancer Research. Cheryl Winkler, Ph.D., principal investigator, Human Genetics Section, Basic Research Program, and William Kopp, Deputy Director, Applied and Developmental Directorate, have been collaborating on this project since 1994.

These findings were shared with a group at Johns Hopkins University, with whom Dr. Winkler and Michael W. Smith, Ph.D., have been working for nearly a decade. The Johns Hopkins group replicated the results. Both groups' results were published in *Nature Genetics* (40[10]:1175–84 and 1185–92, Oct 2008), along with a commentary lauding the findings.

"These two breakthrough genomic studies on kidney disease illustrate the importance of collaborations between scientists at NIH and NIH-funded investigators at Johns Hopkins," said former NIH Director Elias A. Zerhouni, M.D.

Hypothesizing that people of African ancestry may be more likely to carry a risk gene for kidney disease, the NCI and NIDDK group focused on two forms of chronic kidney disease: focal segmental glomerulosclerosis (FSGS)

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Corporate News

Gause, Harris Named Fellows; 5 Others Lauded

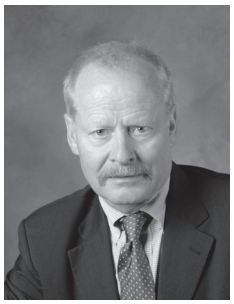
By Maritta Perry Grau

SAIC Corporate Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Ken Dahlberg recently inducted 20 new members into the SAIC Technical Fellows Council (STFC). Among them were SAIC-Frederick's Barry Gause, M.D., Chief Medical Officer for the Clinical Group and head of the Clinical Research Program directorate; and Tim Harris, Ph.D., Chief Technology Officer for the Technology and Research Group and head of the Advanced Technology Program.

SAIC's Chief Medical Officer, John S. Parker, M.D., said the council comprises some of "SAIC's most esteemed engineers, scientists, and technologists in fields of high importance to SAIC's success," Dr. Parker, also a Technical Fellow, is a Corporate senior vice president and chairman of the council.

Barry Gause, M.D.

Dr. Gause is a research oncologist, with a primary research interest in lymphomas and other B-cell malignancies. As a clinical investigator, he has developed and managed cancer clinical trials that included evaluations of the pharmacokinetic and immunologic activity of the agents. His accomplishments include development of a human papillomavirus vaccine clinical trial for patients with advanced cervical cancer. As the director of the Medical Oncology Training Program, he developed the curriculum and restructured the training program to meet the new criteria as outlined by the Academic Council of Graduate Medical Education.



Tim Harris, Ph.D.

Dr. Harris is the chief technical officer for SAIC-Frederick, overseeing the translation of advanced technologies into clinical development.

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Arthur's Corner

Communication Must Be a Constant Focus of Our Attention for Company Success

Larry Arthur, Ph.D.

Effective communication is the cornerstone of a successful organization. This is something I firmly believe. Our ability to establish and maintain close, effective communication with our customer, NCI, has been instrumental in our success as the OTS contractor. We organized into a directorate structure in April 2000 primarily to ensure that we had close and effective communication with NCI. The strategy has paid off.

SAIC-Frederick employees can take pride in knowing that we are viewed as a great resource by NCI: Despite flat or decreasing budgets elsewhere, our work has increased. When the SAIC-Frederick contract began in 2001, the budget was approximately $177 million; and by 2008, the contract's final year, this amount had increased to greater than $640 million. Again, I would like to thank all of you who participated in the successful completion of our previous contract. I appreciate all the efforts that made the last year of the contract particularly successful.

Last year, we again implemented a new organizational structure, retaining the directorates but grouping them under an executive staff. This was yet another step to improve communication with NCI, and I am confident that this, too, will prove effective. At the same time, however, we have not paid equal attention to internal communication, which is just as important. I hope to rectify that by giving top priority this year to internal communication.

I have asked the Communications Subcommittee to develop a comprehensive SAIC-Frederick Corporate Communications Plan. I am providing details about this plan through a series of meetings with front-line managers that began this month.

Two events focused my attention on the need to develop and implement a more effective plan for communications. First, more than 120 employees participated in focus groups, developed as a result of a recent companywide Gallup poll and the ethics survey (see the article on page 8). When reviewing the focus groups' comments, I was quite surprised and disappointed at the amount of misinformation our employees voiced. It was clear to me that SAIC-Frederick upper management has not been as effective as I would have liked them to be in disseminating information.

Also, last year was an incredibly busy year due to close-out of the previous contract and all the additional work brought to Frederick. While the vast majority of our efforts were successful, any time you stress an organization, weaknesses are exposed. We could have done a much better job in some of our communication efforts, particularly in the dissemination of information regarding capital equipment purchases. We now have an opportunity to learn from past experiences and will incorporate these "lessons learned" in our Communications Plan.

SAIC-Frederick is not unique in our concerns regarding effective communications. At our quarterly SAIC Leadership Council meetings, the CEO of SAIC, Ken Dahlberg, continually stresses the need for more effective communication between customers and employees. Communication must take place through a variety of media.

For example, SAIC Corporate features scrolling news updates on the ISSAIC home page, produces a video news report called *SAIC Today*, distributes electronic newsletters such as *The Wire*, and recently launched its first blog, a web log on the topic of cybersecurity. There are many channels through which SAIC is reaching out to employees, including you.

Finally, I recognize that communication does not stop with upper management's obligation of efficiently providing pertinent information to you: Communication is a two-way street—from management to you and from you to management. Thus, we are building into our Communications Plan mechanisms that encourage you to communicate with management. I am confident that we will enhance our communications, which will contribute to our common goal of providing the most effective and efficient organization to support the research efforts on cancer and AIDS.

Larry O. Arthur

Chief Executive Officer of the Operations and Technical Support Contract and Associate Director of the AIDS and Cancer Virus Program, SAIC-Frederick, Inc.

Collaboration *(continued from page 1)*

and HIV-associated nephropathy (HIVAN), characterized by injury to kidney glomeruli and podocyte abnormalities.

The research revealed that MYH9 risk variants are common in African Americans (>60 percent of alleles), compared to European Americans (<4 percent of alleles). MYH9 risk alleles increase the risk of nondiabetic end-stage kidney disease by 2- to 3-fold and the risk of HIVAN and FSGS by 5- to 6-fold. These are the most frequent and the strongest associations yet discovered for a common disease.

The group used an admixture genome-wide scan to first identify a region of the genome that showed increased African ancestry in cases compared to either controls or the rest of the genome. Fine mapping of the region was used to identify *MYH9* as the causal gene.

Dr. Smith, formerly in the Basic Research Program and now Director of Genetics and Genomics, Advanced Technology Program, applied the admixture mapping technique he developed in the Laboratory of Genomic Diversity to localize the kidney failure gene to a region of about a megabase on chromosome 21. George Nelson, Ph.D., and Randy Johnson, both of the Human Genetics Section, Basic Research Program, led the bioinformatics analyses.

From left, Dr. Mike Smith, Dr. Cheryl Winkler, Dr. George Nelson, and Randall Johnson.

Using a positional candidate approach, Dr. Winkler and her colleagues showed the gene involved was *MYH9*. They hypothesize that MYH9–associated kidney disease involves injury to one of the kidney's filtration barriers, formed by specialized cells, podocytes. The team suggests that *MYH9* defects make the podocytes fragile and more susceptible to injury; thus, a secondary assault, such as might occur from viruses, toxins, and other factors, results in the disease.

Researchers hope that increased knowledge of the biology of chronic kidney disease will result in better treatment options for patients with chronic kidney disease from the forms mentioned earlier. Eventually, genetic screening may be used to identify and monitor people at risk for chronic kidney disease.

According to Dr. Winkler, senior author of the study, "This type of personalized medicine has long been a goal of national health research initiatives and is an excellent example of bench-to-bedside research that can lead to improved clinical treatment and therapy."

Corporate Awards *(continued from page 1)*

Trained as a biochemist and molecular biologist, he began as an animal virologist for the British government. His work experience has spanned the spectrum from basic research through running small biotech companies. Today, his major interests include using advanced life sciences technologies for personalized medicine, particularly in cancer research.

Technical Fellow's Responsibilities

In an article about the awards posted on ISSAIC (https://issaic.saic.com), Dr. Parker explained that Technical Fellows provide innovative technical approaches that help to "mark SAIC as a professional 'Science to Solutions' organization invested in solving difficult problems in national security, the environment, energy, cybersecurity, and medical applications."

Dr. Parker also noted that council members are available to the entire company for advice and counsel. Questions can be sent to the council at LSTFC@us.saic.com, and a member knowledgeable in that area will answer.

Publication Awards

In addition to the Outstanding Technical Fellows awards, the council also recognized several SAIC-Frederick researchers for their outstanding publications in the past year. Dr. Maureen "Pat" Martin, Dr. Mary Carrington, and Dr. Jeff Lifson and colleagues were cited in the field of biochemistry and molecular biology for their 2007 article, "Differential Natural Killer Cell-mediated Inhibition of HIV-1 Replication Based on Distinct KIR/HLA Subtypes" (*Journal of Experimental Medicine*, 204[12]:3027-36, 2007).

Dr. Eckart Bindewald, Wojciech Kasprzak, and colleagues were cited in the field of information and communications technology for "RNAJunction: A Database of RNA Junctions and Kissing Loops for Three-dimensional Structural Analysis and Nanodesign" (*Nucleic Acid Research* (36:D392-7, 2007).

Novel Approach Prevents AIDS-Virus Sexual Transmission in Primates

By Frank Blanchard

An inexpensive and widely used additive to food and cosmetics has been shown to prevent transmission of a primate version of the AIDS virus.

The research, published online in the March 4 issue of the journal *Nature*, represents a novel strategy in the search for a safe, affordable, and effective means to prevent the spread of AIDS, especially via sexual transmission to women.

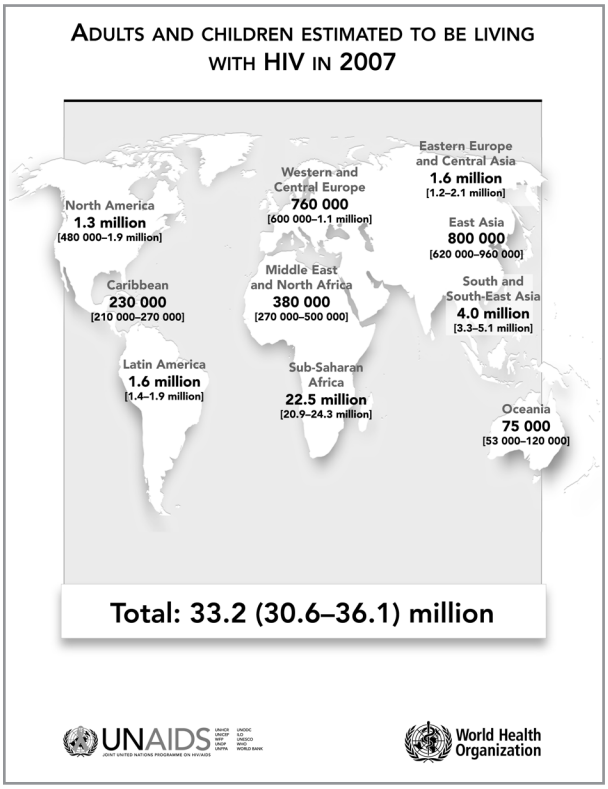
The strategy exploits a recent finding about sexual transmission of AIDS viruses. Using a monkey model, the scientists showed that vaginal exposure to the virus, even in excessive amounts, initially only infects a relatively small number of cells. Without additional target cells, the infection would fail to progress, remain localized, and not cause AIDS.

The immune system, however, responds to the virus by recruiting immune cells (T cells) to the site of infection. This provides the virus with new target cells and the means to spread and establish a systemic infection that can lead to AIDS.

In the current research, investigators at the University of Minnesota, SAIC-Frederick, and collaborating institutions wondered if dampening the initial host response might deprive the virus of new target cells and thereby prevent the virus from establishing itself throughout the body.

In testing this novel idea, they focused on the critical window of opportunity at the earliest stages of infection, when only a limited number of cells are infected, before the virus has spread, a time when the virus is most vulnerable. To try to block recruitment of new target cells by the virus, they chose a safe, widely used compound—glycerol monolaurate (GML).

GML is a naturally occurring compound used in food and cosmetics to protect consumers from microbes and associated inflammatory reactions, including toxic shock syndrome. GML has antibacterial properties, but also inhibits signaling molecules that stimulate the immune system, which can cause inflammation.



The scientists used a primate version of HIV known as simian immunodeficiency virus (SIV). Applied vaginally, GML prevented infection even after repeated exposure to high doses of the monkey virus.

"This result represents a highly encouraging new lead in the search for an effective microbicide to prevent HIV-1 transmission that meets the criteria of safety, affordability, and efficacy," the group reported.

GML is a novel approach in that it lacks the direct antiviral activity of most compounds that have been used so far to try to block sexual transmission of HIV. But the initial success of this approach might be enhanced further by using GML or a similar compound in combination with antiviral agents that directly attack the virus.

While the results are promising, additional research involving larger groups of animals over longer periods of time will be necessary before human clinical trials can be considered.

The research is in line with an intensive new focus in the battle against AIDS. With limited progress toward a vaccine, and the rampant spread of the disease, scientists are looking with renewed interest at prevention strategies that focus on sexual transmission, which is leading the spread of the disease worldwide.

Globally, there were 2.7 million new cases of HIV and 2 million HIV-related deaths in 2007 (www.unaids.org). In sub-Saharan Africa, which accounts for nearly one-third of new HIV infections and AIDS death globally (www.unaids.org), young women are more than three times as likely to be infected as young men. This underscores the importance of developing prevention strategies that young women can use to protect themselves from HIV infection. Approaches based on the new research may help meet this need.

In the current work, the research group first tested the safety of daily vaginal applications of GML for six months in a group of rhesus macaques and found no side effects. Nine monkeys received a warming gel with GML added and three monkeys received the warming gel alone as a control.

The next step was to test the effectiveness of GML against the primate virus. Two animals with a warming gel plus GML and two with the warming gel alone were exposed vaginally to high doses of SIV, and then re-exposed to the virus. They continued to receive daily doses of the active and placebo gels. As a result, both of the GML-treated animals were completely protected from acute systemic infection.

One of the placebo-receiving monkeys, however, became infected with SIV.

The researchers followed up by repeatedly exposing three additional GML-treated monkeys and three control animals to the virus over a period of weeks. Again, GML-treated animals were spared from acute infection, but all three in the control group became infected.

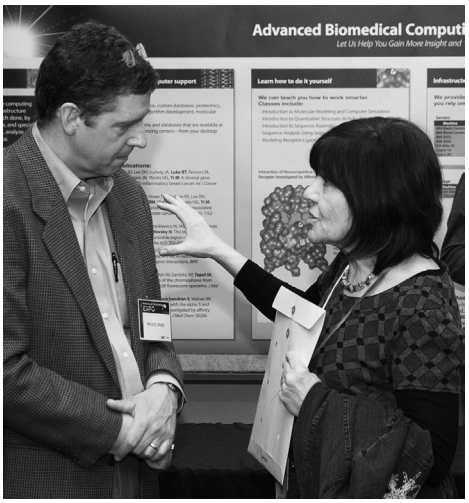
The research was funded by the National Institutes of Health. The lead investigator is Ashley Haase of the University of Minnesota. Collaborators include Jeff Lifson, M.D., head of the AIDS and Cancer Virus Program Directorate, and Jacob Estes, Ph.D., ACVP; and researchers from the Wisconsin Primate Research Center.

Cutting-Edge High Tech, $5K Award at ATP Expo

By Nancy Parrish

The Advanced Technology Program (ATP) Expo on March 27 was a program of "firsts." For the first time, the ATP exhibited the unique capabilities of all of the services in the program, including the Genetics and Genomics, Proteins and Proteomics, and Imaging and Nanotechnology laboratories, as well as the Laboratory Animal Sciences Program, Visual Communications group, and the Advanced Biomedical Computing Center.

Also for the first time, the ATP offered an opportunity to receive a $5,000 Research Support Award. According to Dr. Bruce Crise, who is managing the "mini-grant," applications for the award will be accepted until April 17, and the winner will be announced on April 24 (For more information, contact Dr. Crise at criseb@ncifcrf.gov, or 301-846-5739).



Drawing more than 200 attendees from the NCI-Frederick and Bethesda campuses, the Expo provided an opportunity for networking between the laboratory groups and potential collaborators, as well as between the laboratory groups themselves. "Not only are we able to meet people who want to use our services, but we're also learning how we can work together with other ATP groups," said Kelley Banfield, Ph.D., of the Laboratory of Molecular Technology.

Festival Honoree Evolves from Plant and Animal to… Darwin!

By Nancy Parrish

Each year the Spring Research Festival honors a plant or animal that produces substances shown to have a biochemical activity in fighting or preventing disease. This year, in a departure from tradition, the Spring Research Festival honors a human, Charles Darwin, for his contributions to many scientific fields.

The year 2009 marks the bicentennial of Darwin's birth and the 150th anniversary of the publication of his seminal work, the *Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection*. According to the Spring Research Festival web site, this "British naturalist who during his lifetime never heard the word 'genetics' much less the acronym DNA, managed to derive from his meticulous observation and persistent curiosity, a unifying and logical explanation for diversity of life on the entire planet."

Festival Week Begins April 27

The 13th annual NCI-Frederick and Fort Detrick Spring Research Festival is a joint effort with the National Interagency Confederation for Biological Research (NICBR),* and caps four days of activities promising to hold something for everyone. "Our goals are to share information among scientific disciplines and to acquaint our neighbors in the NCI-Frederick and Fort Detrick communities with the research we conduct, the discoveries we have made, and the challenges that lie ahead," said Julie Hartman, chairperson of the event.

For more information, visit http://web.ncifcrf.gov/events/springfest

*Participating agencies include the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Department of Agriculture; Department of Defense/Army; Department of Homeland Security; National Cancer Institute; and National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

Highlights of Festival Week

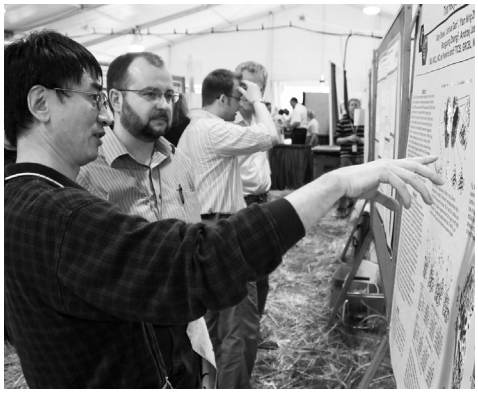
April 27: Distinguished Speaker Lecture Series talk by Stephen N. Jones, Ph.D., Department of Cell Biology, University of Massachusetts Medical School.

April 28: "Chemistry as a Life Science," symposium featuring keynote speaker Xinhua Ji, Ph.D., Chief, Biomolecular Structure Section, Macromolecular Crystallography Laboratory, hosted by the Center for Cancer Research.

April 28: Golf tournament at the Maryland National Golf Club, sponsored by the Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association to raise funds for poster grants, the Young Engineers and Scientists program at Fort Detrick, and other local educational programs.

April 29-30: The Spring Research Festival opens at 10 a.m., Ditto Avenue and Sultan Street.

- Biomedical Research Equipment and Supplies Expo, with nearly 200 exhibit booths displaying scientific equipment and technology.
- Health Education and Community Services Exhibition
- Higher Education Open House hosted by NICBR on April 30.



Visit the Conference Planners at the Spring Research Festival

By Ashley Hartman

If you would like to learn more about how Conference and Events Planning can help you prepare for your next conference, visit the professional conference planners at their booth at the Spring Research Festival in April. Karen Kochersberger and Julia Lam have the expertise to save you time in planning your next conference, and their services are free. They offer everything from site and meeting facility selection, to budget and cost tracking and audiovisual coordination and staging.

Stop by and visit their booth, pick up a brochure, and see what they can do to make your event a success.

BDP Develops New Cancer Drugs and Treatments

By Frank Blanchard

New drugs and treatments for ovarian, liver, kidney, and brain cancers have all been developed recently as clinical-grade prototypes by the Biopharmaceutical Development Program (BDP).

The liver drug was developed for researchers at the University of Pittsburgh and has begun phase I clinical trials. Novel biopharmaceuticals for ovarian and kidney cancers are awaiting regulatory approval for human testing.

The brain cancer treatment is undergoing toxicology studies as a prelude to clinical trials. BDP recently produced new drugs and vaccines for leukemia, melanoma, type-I diabetes, and malaria.

Biopharmaceutical Development Program 2007–2008

Product	Application	Organization	Status
rhIL-15	Metastatic Melanoma and Metastatic Renal Cell Cancer Refractory to Standard Therapy	NCI (Intramural)	IND Submission Pending
HSV M032	Herpesvirus being developed for the treatment of brain tumors	Univ. of Alabama at Birmingham (NCI RAID)	Toxicology Studies Ongoing
Mutant IL-15 Fc	New Onset Type I Diabetes Mellitus	NIDDK, NIH	Toxicology Studies Pending
IL-2 Fc	New Onset Type I Diabetes Mellitus	NIDDK, NIH	Toxicology Studies Pending
BSAM-2 / Alhydrogel (Final Vaccine Product)	Malaria Prevention	MVDB, NIAID, NIH	Phase I Clinical Trial Pending
Ad5.SSTR/TK.RGD	Ovarian Cancer	Univ. of Alabama at Birmingham (NCI RAID)	Phase I Clinical Trial Pending
Ad 5/3 Delta-24	Adenovirus product designed to attack ovarian tumors	Helsinki Univ./ Univ. of Alabama (NCI RAID)	Toxicology and Biodistribution Studies Pending
CPG 7909 Adjuvant	Malaria Prevention	MVDB, NIAID, NIH	Phase I Clinical Trial Pending
AdGMCA9	Kidney Cancer	UCLA (NCI RAID)	IND Submission Pending
HA-22 (Final Formulation Sterile Bulk)	Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia	NCI CRADA w/MedImmune, Inc. (by sponsor)	For Further Manufacturing
AdVhAFP	Hepatocellular Carcinoma	Univ. of Pittsburgh (NCI RAID)	Phase I Investigational Use
STAT-3 Decoy	Squamous Cell Carcinoma of the Head and Neck	Univ. of Pittsburgh Medical Center (NCI RAID)	Phase 0 Investigational Use
Endotoxin (Formulated under cGMP)	Multiple Indications	NCI Intramural	Available for various clinical and non-clinical studies
Herpes Virus rRp450	Primary or Secondary Liver Cancer	Massachusetts General Hospital (NCI RAID)	IND Submission Pending

We Don't Sell Catsup, but…

By Frank Blanchard

Branding sells catsup, so why is it important to us?

The success of a commodity brand lies in its ability to clearly and instantly communicate the elements of quality and value, and to build loyalty over time. By branding a company, we achieve similar results: relationships and trust.

Your part of the organization also benefits from a strong company brand. It helps attract and retain the best employees. It improves interaction with outside vendors. A strong brand will attract potential collaborators and research partners.

"Branding" may make you think of TV ads, but think of it this way: Our company brand generates the very first reaction from anyone with whom we have contact—people we meet and people we know. If that reaction is positive and meaningful, we're in good stead.

Our brand is supported or degraded by the daily interactions that each of us has as an SAIC-Frederick employee. The success of our company brand does not result from a marketing campaign. It is the product of what we say and do.

The key is unified and consistent language and presentation.

A lot of this is cut-and-paste simple:

1. Use the new logo.

SAIC | Frederick

2. Use common language, such as that used in the SAIC-Frederick mission statement, for describing the company (see SharePoint, http://spoint-ncif/personal/blanchardf/Shared Documents/Mission Statement.doc; use your NIH logon).
3. Follow our graphic identity.

These and other branding materials are available from SharePoint (http://spoint-ncif/personal/blanchardf/Shared Documents/Index.doc; use your NIH logon); by contacting Scientific Publications Graphics & Media (ncispgm@mail.nih.gov); or from Frank Blanchard, Director of Public Affairs, blanchardf@mail.nih.gov.

Focus Groups ID Need for Better Communication

By Ashley Hartman

The results of the SAIC Corporate Ethics Survey, taken in early 2008, brought to light the need for improved communication from management. Larry Arthur, Ph.D., chief executive officer, SAIC-Frederick, is currently working with members of the OTS Management Committee to develop a formal communications plan.

Last December, Dr. Arthur shared the results of the survey in a companywide memo. In addition to improving communication from management, the results indicated that employees may not be reporting ethical concerns because they fear retaliation. "I want to emphasize that SAIC has a zero-tolerance policy for retaliation against employees who report misconduct and I strongly endorse this policy," Dr. Arthur said in the memo.

Since the survey had a low response rate—about 35 percent of SAIC-Frederick staff—Dr. Arthur and top management wanted to gain a better understanding of the results. They decided to use a focus group tool that was introduced to Andi Gnuschke, Ethics Coordinator, at her annual Corporate Employee Ethics Committee Meeting in 2008.

Focus Groups

Bob McMains and Peter Beck, consultants employed by SAIC corporate, came to SAIC-Frederick in January, to host six focus group sessions.

Ms. Gnuschke broke the sessions into groups: one focus group was for new hires of less than six months; one was for tenured employees of more than 15 years; one was for first-line managers and supervisors; and three sessions were broken down by functional groups (employees in the Technology and Research Group, the Clinical Group, and the Operations and Financial Groups). About 20–25 randomly selected people participated in each focus group.

Mr. Beck led the sessions, using a focus group tool called Thinktank that ensures participant anonymity. Each participant used a laptop computer to answer questions posed by the facilitator. All of the responses were shown on each laptop screen, with no names associated with the comments. Participants had the opportunity to respond to each other's comments and could express their opinions verbally if they wanted to.

"We were quite surprised that the issues brought up were extremely consistent across all six of the focus group sessions," Mrs. Gnuschke said. "The most significant issue we are currently tackling is ineffective communication from management."

Comments from Focus Group Participants

It was clear among the responses received for this article that many employees are afraid to voice ethical concerns.

"It was surprising that quite a few people in my group felt they could not go to their direct supervisor to discuss issues and that they feared retaliation for doing so at times," said one of the focus group participants.

"I think we have to get past the stigma of being retaliated against before we can freely voice our opinions. Even negative opinions can spur positive change," another participant said.

The respondents also had suggestions for how to improve communication from management.

One participant suggested, "A monthly e-mail from [Dr. Arthur], or a monthly 'town-hall' meeting in the café with [Dr. Arthur] and/or other top management where you could discuss a predetermined subject, or voice your opinion on that subject."

"Top management could, on a regular basis, have a newsletter or e-mail to inform employees of pertinent information (maybe monthly or quarterly). Possibly there could be an information corner added to the web site," a participant said.

"I believe there should be more frequent communication and employees should be kept up-to-date on happenings both within their programs and also within SAIC-Frederick, Inc.," said one participant.

Another participant proposed, "To make it a 'practice' to channel information down the chain. Do not assume everyone knows the same information you know."

Have an Idea?

Try ESP!

By Maritta Perry Grau

ESP usually refers to incoming ideas, sensed through extraordinary means. Our ESP is the opposite: You send ideas out… to a panel that can make them come true.

Let the Employee Suggestion Program hear your ideas for something new that will make SAIC-Frederick operations run more smoothly, save money, or help with research. The Employee Suggestion Program provides you with an opportunity to be recognized for innovative and creative ideas for enhancing our overall operations.

You are encouraged to identify specific areas for improvement and propose solutions that will promote the efficiency and effectiveness of our operations. Note that these are "innovative or creative ideas."

The committee does not handle personal complaints, personal or ethical issues, grievances, suggestions for minor improvements that could be implemented as part of normal operations or of your job, or suggestions that should go to another committee, such as the ones listed at this web site: web.ncifcrf.gov/campus/committees/.

Printed suggestion forms are available in this issue of *News & Views* (below) and from committee representatives while an on-line form is being developed. If you have an innovative or creative idea you want to share, fill out a form and send it to a committee representative.

Committee members are Roxanne Angell (Advanced Biomedical Computing Center); Ligia Pinto (Applied and Developmental Research Support); Kathy Miller (Advanced Technology Program); Barbara Kending (Biopharmaceutical Development Program); Laura Knott (Basic Science Program); Teresa Stitely (Contract and Acquisitions, Contract Planning and Administration, and Human Resources); Joy Beveridge (Clinical Research Directorate); Scott Keimig (Environment, Health, and Safety); Debbie Green (Financial Management); Laura Geil (Laboratory Animal Sciences Program); and Amy Cutshall (Vaccine Clinical Materials Program). Non-voting members are Steve Harshman (OTS Management Committee Representative) and Connie Suders (Contract Goals and Objectives Opportunities).

SAIC-Frederick Employee Suggestion Form

All fields are required fields. Fill out form and send to a committee representative listed above.

Name _____

Phone Number _____

E-mail _____

Title _____

Suggestion (Purpose) _____

Benefit _____

Long Description _____

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Soppet Returns to NCI-Frederick as New LMT Director

By Michael Smith and Ashley Hartman

Daniel Soppet, Ph.D.

Daniel Soppet, Ph.D., returned to NCI-Frederick in February as the new director of the Laboratory of Molecular Technology (LMT), Advanced Technology Program (ATP). From 1991 to 1993, he was a postdoctoral fellow in Dr. Luis Parada's laboratory.

Dr. Soppet was one of the early hires at Human Genome Sciences, Inc., of Rockville, Maryland, where he identified and characterized more than 50 new genes and set up high-throughput cell-based expression assays.

For the past eight years, Dr. Soppet was the director of lead discovery in charge of assay development, high-throughput screening, and partnership programs with Novartis and Merck at Avalon Pharmaceuticals, Inc., of Germantown, Maryland.

"He has excellent management experience and a strong high-throughput background, and brings expertise in gene sequencing, qPCR, microarray, and drug characterization to the LMT," said Michael Smith, Ph.D., head of Genetics and Genomics, ATP.

Dr. Soppet earned his bachelor's degree in biology and psychology from the University of California at Santa Cruz and earned his Ph.D. in neural sciences from Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri.

The LMT continues to offer Sanger Sequencing, Roche (454) next-generation pyrosequencing, Affymetrix microarrays, array comparative genome hybridization, miRNA microarrays, custom Agilent arrays, transgenic genotyping, qPCR, MLPA, and mutation detection. The mission of the laboratory is to provide "cutting-edge genomic expertise, tools, and analysis with a focus on quality and service. We succeed when our customers succeed, and are committed to helping the NCI and scientific community understand, treat, and eradicate both cancer and disease" (www.ncifcrf.gov/atp/).

"Bringing Dr. Soppet on board is part of our commitment to make sure the LMT, the Core Genotyping Facility, and the Sequencing Facility fulfill and facilitate the genetics and genomics needs through the Advanced Technology Program for NCI investigators," Dr. Smith said.

Cindy Culler's Voice: A Hidden Treasure in Central Glassware

By Ashley Hartman

Cindy Culler

If you use glassware on a daily basis, you might have met Cindy Culler, secretary of Central Glassware Services. But what you might not know about Mrs. Culler is that she is also an opera singer.

Mrs. Culler was singing and playing the piano by the age of six. Shortly after that, she began singing in contests on the radio. She sang opera and songs from movies, such as "We Could Make Believe" from the musical *Showboat*. In 1954, at the age of 12, Mrs. Culler began taking singing lessons at the Visitation Academy in Frederick, and at age 14, she began taking opera lessons at Hood College. "I love opera," she said. "It was as natural to me as breathing."

She continued to take opera lessons throughout her high school years (1956–1960) at St. John's at Prospect Hall. Although she was not able to receive any college credits at the time, Mrs. Culler said she enjoyed the lessons and the college atmosphere.

Mrs. Culler describes opera as "a very 'cultured' way of singing. Once you sing opera, it is very difficult to sing most different kinds of music." She is a high lyric soprano singer and a fan of Mozart.

Her father, Ted, was very supportive of her talents. He played piano and violin, and was the first violin in the Frederick Orchestra until he was 83 years old. "I guess that is where I get any musical talent that I have," Mrs. Culler said.

Mrs. Culler traveled as an army wife for many years, and came back to Frederick in 1977. She resumed opera lessons at Frederick Community College from 1984 to 1986 and went back to Hood College to take lessons from Jeanne Haughn Kelly. "Jeanne was the first woman choir director for the Naval Academy in Annapolis. She also taught music at Levine School of Music in Washington, D.C." Another one of Mrs. Culler's teachers, whom she calls her "soul mate in opera," was Cristoforo Padula, who lived in the same village in Italy (Modena) as renowned opera tenor Luciano Pavarotti. Mr. Padula taught her Bel Canto, the "proper" way to sing opera. "It means beautiful singing," Mrs. Culler said of the 17th century Italian opera term.

> *"I am thrilled to work for a company that is trying to obtain a cure for so many life-threatening diseases."*

When Ms. Kelly left Hood College, she asked Mrs. Culler to join the opera group at Levine. "It was the most fun of my life. We performed at the school, at embassies, at the Duke Ellington Theatre of Washington, D.C., and at private parties," Mrs. Culler said. She performed with the group from 1987 to 1992. "We did a lot of skits from operas and my favorites were all of Mozart's operas," she said. She especially liked *The Magic Flute*, *Don Giovanni*, *Cosi Fan Tutte* (*Women Are Like That*), and *The Marriage of Figaro*.

While singing with the opera group, Mrs. Culler also performed data entry work at National Geographic. She said knowing how to play the piano helped her type.

Mrs. Culler has been in other choirs, such as the Frederick Singers, and performed in plays with the Fredericktown Players. She continues to sing at weddings and funerals, frequently singing Ave Maria. "I love the singing, but I want nothing to do with the 'politics' that come with a lot of it," she said.

Mrs. Culler has worked at NCI-Frederick for 15 years. She worked in an animal research building for three years before becoming secretary for Central Glassware, under Michael Lind. "I liked Mr. Lind as soon as I met him. He's a very, very kind man," she said.

Mrs. Culler works with budgets, staff schedules, time records, product ordering, inventory, and takes care of customer requests, just to name a few of her duties. "I enjoy my work here very much," she said. "We have a lot of good, devoted employees."

Central Glassware has 18 full-time employees and one part-time employee who work in six kitchens scattered across NCI-Frederick, and pick up glassware from 262 labs.

"I am thrilled to work for a company that is trying to obtain a cure for so many life-threatening diseases. My husband passed away from cancer, plus many of my relatives and friends have passed away from different kinds of cancer," Mrs. Culler said.

Getting Fit: Find Your Balance

By Bill Lonergan

The optimal definition of fitness includes three aspects: endurance, flexibility, and strength; the challenge is finding a balance among the three. Here are some tips that may help you achieve this balance:

- Aerobic exercise builds endurance, which benefits your cardiovascular system. Aerobic exercise is also the foundation of a weight management program.
- Strength training can improve stamina, posture, and resistance to injuries, and contribute to weight management.
- Flexibility exercises maintain joint range of motion, lengthen muscles, improve circulation, and reduce risk of injury and muscle soreness.

Aerobic exercise is any activity that uses large muscle groups in a continuous, rhythmic fashion for sustained periods. Aerobic exercise can be weight-bearing, ranging from walking to jogging, rope skipping, and dance; or non-weight-bearing, such as bicycling, stationary cycling, swimming, and rowing.

Remember:

- Keep the pace comfortable—aerobic benefits typically commence after 12–20 minutes of sustained exercise, so be sure not to run out of energy too fast.
- Check the intensity of the exercise by checking your heart rate—if you keep your exercise heart rate within a range of 55 percent to 80 percent of an estimated maximum heart rate (220 minus your age), you're doing well. Many gyms have aerobic machines with heart rate–checking functions built in.

Strength training can be as simple as regular calisthenics, although typically it involves weight machines or free weights. Just be sure that your strength training includes exercises for every major muscle group, including arms, chest, back, stomach, hips, and legs.

Start with weight that's comfortable to handle for eight repetitions. Gradually add more repetitions until you can complete 12 repetitions. For greater strength conditioning when the exercises become easy, add more weight or more repetitions, in sets of eight to 12.

Flexibility training essentially consists of stretches. Like strength conditioning, flexibility exercises should include stretching for all the major muscle groups: legs, back, and shoulders, especially. Many gyms have stretching areas with balance balls, mats, and information on technique. Stretches are more effective when held for several cycles of breath: the classic technique is to extend on the exhale; on the inhale, back off the stretch a bit, then deepen on the next exhale.

Before You Begin

Always check with your doctor before beginning any exercise program, especially if you're over 40, or have cardiovascular risk factors such as smoking, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, or a family history of heart disease.

If you haven't exercised in a while, you might want to begin with a home-based exercise, after getting your doctor's okay. You can find many aerobics and flexibility programs on DVDs that you can use to supplement or to ease back into a gym routine.

How Much to Exercise?

The frequency and duration of exercise depends on your goals: exercising 3–4 times each week, 20 minutes at a time, is fine for general health maintenance; weight loss is more effective with 4–6 days per week of exercise, 45 minutes or longer per session, with at least 30 minutes of aerobic activity.

See you at the gym.

Get Ready to "Feel Fine in 2009"

By Ashley Hartman

NCI-Frederick's Health and Wellness Program now has a new name to go along with its new activities: Feeling Fine in 2009.

"We changed the name because 'Fitness Challenge' made it seem like the program was only about exercise. We want the program to encompass the entire body, mind, and spirit. We want to focus on healthy eating, stress reduction, and other things, as well as exercise and weight reduction,' said Carolyn Cable, program coordinator for Occupational Health Services (OHS) and coordinator of Feeling Fine in 2009.

The winner of the contest to rename the fitness program was Kandy Rahochik, secretary, OHS.

"'Feeling Fine in 2009' came out of casually talking with my coworkers about a new, catchy phrase," Ms. Rahochik said. She looks forward to renewed enthusiasm in the fitness program and to working with NCI-Frederick employees to become healthier.

"A new name means new things will happen this year," said Mary Carol Fleming, senior adult nurse practitioner, OHS.

For more information about Feeling Fine in 2009, contact OHS at 301-846-1096.

Springtime Breezes Bring on Sneezes

By Mary Carol Fleming

Spring brings bright colors, delightful sounds, and sunny spirits. But it also brings pollen—and runny noses, scratchy throats, and itchy, watery eyes. Pollen allergy, or hay fever, is one of the most common chronic diseases in the United States, causing as many as 35 million people to suffer from allergic reactions ranging from cold-like symptoms and allergic conjunctivitis to the more dangerous, allergic asthma.

Where Does Pollen Come From?

Common types of allergy-producing pollen come from trees, grasses, and weeds that do not have showy flowers but can produce pollen in huge quantities. In our area, the trees that produce the most pollen include oak, birch, ash, maple, and elm. Tree pollen is most prevalent between January and May.

Grasses produce their pollen in late spring and early summer. Top pollen-producing grasses in the Northeast include blue, timothy, sweet vernal, Bermuda, and meadow fescue. Weeds become active in the late summer and are the most prolific producers of allergenic pollen. Ragweed is the major culprit, but other major sources in our area include pigweed, cocklebur, lamb's quarters, Russian thistle (tumbleweed), and marsh elder.

Is It an Allergy or a Cold?

There is no good way to tell the difference between symptoms of an allergy and those of a cold, although allergy symptoms may last longer. Signs and symptoms of airborne allergies include:

- Sneezing, often with a runny or clogged nose
- Coughing and postnasal drip
- Itching eyes, nose, and throat
- Watering eyes
- Conjunctivitis
- Allergic shiners (dark circles under the eyes caused by increased blood flow near the sinuses)
- Allergic salute (in a child, persistent upward rubbing of the nose that causes a crease mark on the nose)

Anyone who has any respiratory illness that lasts longer than a week or two should consult a health care provider.

How You Can Reduce Exposure to Pollen

Remain indoors with the windows closed, especially in the mornings, when the outdoor pollen levels are highest. Sunny, windy days can be especially troublesome. If you must work outdoors, wear a face mask designed to filter pollen out of the air.

Take your vacation at the height of the expected pollinating period, and choose a location where such exposure would be minimal, such as at a beach or on a cruise.

Use air conditioners inside your home or car, and an air-filtering device in your home heating and cooling systems. Use a portable filtering device in individual rooms for reducing animal allergens.

Medical Treatment Options

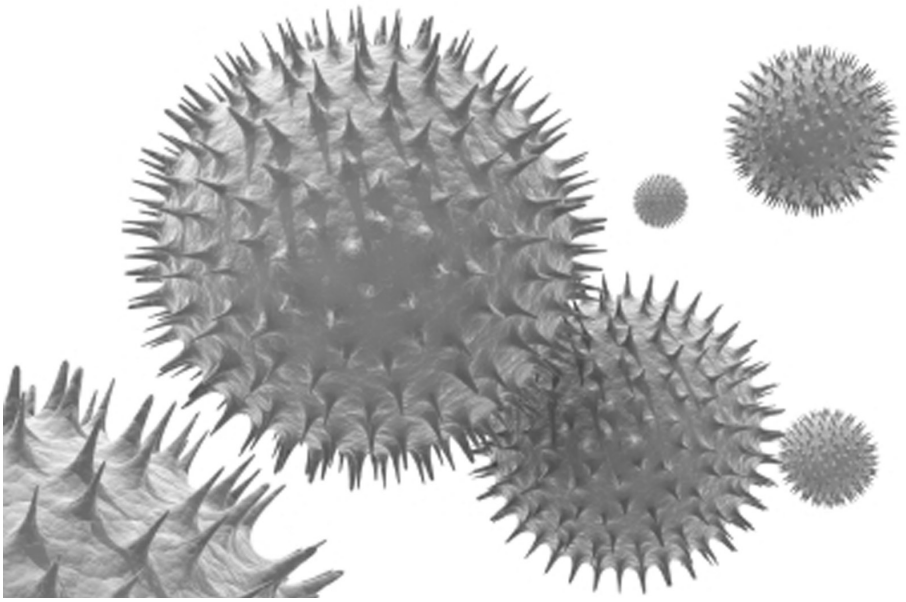
Symptoms can also be controlled by medicines. If over-the-counter medicines don't give you relief or they cause unwanted side effects, your health care provider can prescribe antihistamines and topical nasal steroids.

You should not, however, use over-the-counter or prescription decongestant nose drops and sprays for more than a few days. When used for longer periods, these medicines can lead to even more congestion and swelling of the nasal passages.

For More Information

Information for this article was adapted from the resources listed below. For more details, consult the web site shown.

- National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, *Airborne Allergens: Something in the Air,* NIH Publication No. 03-7045 April 2003. http://www3.niaid.nih.gov/topics/allergicDiseases/PDF/airborne_allergens.pdf
- Allergyescape.com: www.allergyescape.com/Pollen-Allergy.html
- allergies.about.com/od/allergies101/a/seasonalallergy.htm



Discovery Café Draws Crowd at Grand Opening

By Nancy Parrish

After much anticipation, the NCI-Frederick community was rewarded with the grand opening of the Discovery Café on March 3. More than 200 people came to the event, which featured remarks by Craig Reynolds, Ph.D., NCI Associate Director; and Larry Arthur, Ph.D., Chief Executive Officer, SAIC-Frederick. SAIC-Frederick managed the renovation.

The all-new, much-improved eatery represents months of planning, design, and construction to completely renovate the former cafeteria. With new furniture, lighting, carpeting, and colorful wall coverings, the Discovery Café is a treat for the eyes as well as the taste buds.

"It's amazing what has been done here, especially when you consider we only began the project five months ago," said Paul Miller, chairperson of the Café Users Committee. The Café Users Committee was responsible for providing community suggestions and insight to the acquisition and design teams.

The project team for the café renovation cut the cake at the grand opening. L to R: Bob Hardisty, Peter Boving, Bart Christy, Chris Rowe, Sharon Jackson (Discovery Café Manager), Rose Mallasch (District Manager, Compass Group), John Trifone, Rich Pendleton, Dennis Dougherty, Paul Miller.

In his remarks, Dr. Reynolds thanked all those involved in the renovation, and especially Bob Hardisty, Project Team leader, and Mr. Miller. Dr. Reynolds also thanked Dr. Arthur, as "the guy who came up with the idea" of changing the concept of the café from a place where you come simply to eat a meal to a place where you can come any time of day for meetings with colleagues.

Dr. Arthur said the idea of a meeting place goes back to the days of Werner Kirsten (associate director of the NCI-Frederick Cancer Research and Development Center from 1988 to 1992), who envisioned a place like a university faculty club, with lots of wood paneling, worn, cushy furniture, and brandy. "Well, we don't have that, and I'm glad," Dr. Arthur continued, "but what we do have is the opportunity to have a meeting place where we can come to discuss science." He also noted that "we requested that the food take a step up," to meet the requirements of the strong fitness and health program that we have at NCI-Frederick.

Discovery Café Hours of Operation

Hot Breakfast: 7:00 to 9:45 a.m.

Continental Breakfast: 9:45 to 11:00 a.m.

Lunch: 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Snacks and Beverages: 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Grab N Go items: Available all day

Mr. Hardisty recognized invited guests from NCI-Frederick and SAIC-Frederick, as well as representatives from Cini-Little International, the concept design firm; Sugar Associates, the interior design firm; Mazzuca Contracting, the construction firm; Eurest Dining Services, the new food services company; and Compass Group, the parent of Eurest Dining Services. He also thanked each member of his project team. "I'm very happy to see the completion of this project," Mr. Hardisty said. "It has exceeded the expectations of everyone involved."

For details, weekly menus, and monthly events, visit the web site: web.ncifcrf.gov/campus/cafe/.

Supergraphic

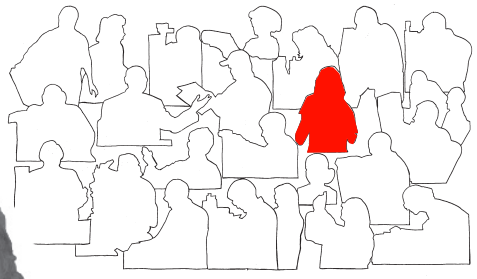
Ms. King: Cleaning Her Way to a Cure

By Ashley Hartman

For Marlene King, Cleaning Technician at the Vaccine Pilot Plant (VPP), maintaining a clean environment is in her blood. She began working at SAIC-Frederick 11 years ago, and has worked at the VPP for the past three years. "I thought that working at a cancer research facility would be a way to help others," Ms. King said.

Ms. King said she has always enjoyed cleaning and even cleans houses on the side. "I love the challenge of keeping the GMP area of the VPP a bacteria-free, mold-free, and particulate-free environment," Ms. King said. "A particulate-free environment is extremely important because vaccines for human consumption are made at the VPP."

Ms. King was very excited that her



picture was included in the supergraphic montage in Building 549.

She believes the photos demonstrate the diverse job opportunities at NCI-Frederick.

FME Recognizes Accident-free Safety Achievements

By Maritta Perry Grau

Recently, Facilities Maintenance and Engineering (FME) recognized 14 employees who had achieved Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)-recordable, accident-free safety records. The ceremony was held in the Building 549 auditorium, which was filled with attendees for the occasion.

From left are Tim Lenhart, Manager of Operations and Maintenance; Ralph Dodson, Tools and Parts Attendant, who was recognized for the safety leadership he provided over the past year; and Bill Lonergan, FME Director.

Several FME shops were recognized as having no OSHA-recordable lost work days or restricted work days in 2008. Pictured from left with Bill Lonergan, FME Director; and Tim Lenhart, Manager of Operations and Maintenance, FME; are Dave Davis, Supervisor, Support Shop; Jay Walsh, Supervisor, Electric Shop; Dennis Angel, Supervisor, HVAC Shop; Bob Lawler, Supervisor, Carpenter/Paint Shop; Doug Leggett, Supervisor, Telecommunications/Labor Shop; Al Spade, Supervisor, Instrument Shop; and Ronnie Lambert, Supervisor, Sheetmetal/Weld Shop.

Eight employees have been OSHA-recordable, accident-free for five years: 2004 to 2008. Pictured from left with Tim Lenhart, Manager of Operations and Maintenance, FME; and Bill Lonergan, FME Director; are Greg MacKenzie, Pipefitter; Woodrow Smith, Laborer; David Wiles, Laborer; Tom Wantz, Sheetmetal Mechanic; Kenny Weller, Pipefitter; and Bryan Vaughn, Laborer. Absent were Dale Hauver, Sheetmetal Mechanic, and Donald Shriner, Service worker.

Project Management

Give the Right Information to the Right People At the Right Time in the Right Format

By Carmen V. Clark

Have you ever counted how many times a day you e-mail, talk on the phone, or walk down the hall to communicate with colleagues about a project? You probably do these things a lot more often than you realize.

The Project Management Institute (PMI) states that project managers spend most of their project time communicating with team members and stakeholders. PMI gives communication high priority and defines it as a systematic approach to conveying the right information to the right people at the right time in the right format.

The Art of Communication

There's an art to communicating well. Eye contact, body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice all influence effective oral communication. Vocabulary level, word choice, and sentence structure strongly impact the understanding of written communication. And, whether oral or written, communication doesn't take place unless both the sender and the receiver interpret the message in the same way.

However, not everyone processes information in the same way—you may understand things more clearly when they are written down, while your colleague may prefer to receive information verbally.

To communicate effectively, individual needs must be distinguished. PMI's method for communication can be uniformly applied to all projects.

Identify Stakeholders

First, you must identify anyone affected by the project. You must define these stakeholders by their individual interests in the project, and by their level of impact on the project's success.

For example, in a project to implement software for managing laboratory samples, stakeholders might include:

- laboratory staff using the software
- sample owner(s) who needs to look up the status of his or her sample being processed
- department head or director sponsoring (i.e., funding) the project
- program (or vendor) performing the implementation
- program and individuals maintaining the software
- quality assurance department,
- external users who might interface with the software to obtain data
- financial department staff
- procurement staff

Next, you must determine what information each stakeholder expects to have and how he or she prefers to receive that information. Some stakeholders may need routine progress reports in a paper format about the implementation from a management perspective; others have a need to know where the project stands from a user perspective—an e-mail would do. Still others from a cost management perspective might need to have a list of expenditures to date. All have a need to know to do their jobs successfully.

Finally, you must ensure that the relevant information, such as performance data—status reports, progress measurements, and forecasts—for projects, actually reaches the appropriate stakeholder.

Recognize all this? It is simply "customer service" under a different heading.

Channel Information

To provide this information, you, as project manager, must develop a process to channel the information in the right format at the right time. This process is documented in the Project Communications Plan and becomes part of the project plan.

Finally, you must manage that process to ensure the process is carried out as scheduled. How effectively the Communications Plan is followed becomes a matter of project quality.

Are you ready to improve those project communication skills? You can find helpful Stakeholder Analysis and Communications Plan templates at saic.ncifcrf.gov/projectmanagement/pm/Templates.aspx.

In the July *News & Views*, look for information to help you improve the efficiency and effectiveness of your deadline reminders.

Quality Assurance

Establish Internal Control through Information, Training, and Tools (Part 2)

By Steve Harshman

When you think of your role as a supervisor or simply as a member of a team that produces quality work, do you think about how you ensure your group is producing a quality product or how you contribute to that output? Do

you also think about the ways you can control process inputs (people, supplies, equipment, and procedures) and how that can affect the quality of materials and the output?

In the January issue of *News & Views*, we talked about the importance of developing and documenting standard procedures to control how work is performed. In this column, we will review how to establish additional internal controls for performing work.

Establish Internal Control

Establishing internal control of our operations also requires that we control those who perform the work. Although some people believe direct supervision is the only way to control the work that is performed, in terms of quality management, controlling the people component of our process inputs is important, too. Establishing internal control means providing everyone with the information, training, and tools needed to effectively accomplish an assigned task.

For example, employees need to know what the customer wants, what is expected of the employees as individuals, and how their contributions support the overall effort designed to satisfy customer requirements. Those requirements must be effectively communicated to all employees—even those who don't interact directly with the customer. Otherwise, employees will have to determine for themselves what the customer wants, and this can result in an output that does not meet customer expectations.

Recognize Individual Responsibility for Meeting Requirements

All employees must also clearly understand their individual responsibilities in meeting these requirements and how those activities relate to other efforts within the organization. If internal customer–supplier relationships are not aligned and controlled, we cannot be sure that we are consistently meeting external customer requirements.

Once employees know what the customer wants, they need to understand how the required work will be accomplished. Training employees to follow documented standard operating procedures (see "Establish Internal Control through Documented Procedures," *News & Views* 15[1]:8, 2009) ensures that work will be completed the same way every time, regardless of who is performing the work.

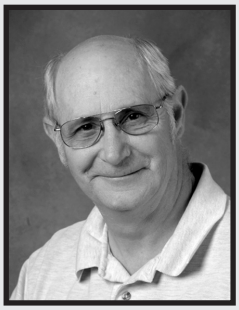
We often hear the phrase, "People are our most important resource." We can just as easily say, "People are our most important process input," so we must provide employees with the necessary information and the appropriate training to successfully accomplish the work.

Provide Controlled Tools

We must also provide employees with controlled tools to ensure that the outcomes of their efforts will be acceptable. In the next issue, we will discuss these tools and how they should be controlled.

If you would like to learn more about quality performance and the importance of establishing internal control, plan to attend the Quality Management class scheduled for June 9, 2009. Contact Steve Harshman, 301-228-4003, harshmanj@mail.nih.gov for information, and watch for an e-mail announcement about the class.

In Memoriam



Homer Cavanaugh

In November of 2008, longtime Facilities Maintenance and Engineering (FME) employee Homer Cavanaugh passed away as the result of a brief illness. "It is with much sadness and a heavy heart that we recall the untimely passing of our coworker and friend, Homer Cavanaugh. He was a dedicated, conscientious employee who gave personal attention along with his technical service. Mr. Cavanaugh served numerous customers during his 20 years at NCI-Frederick, and made countless friends in the process," said Tim Lenhart, his supervisor.

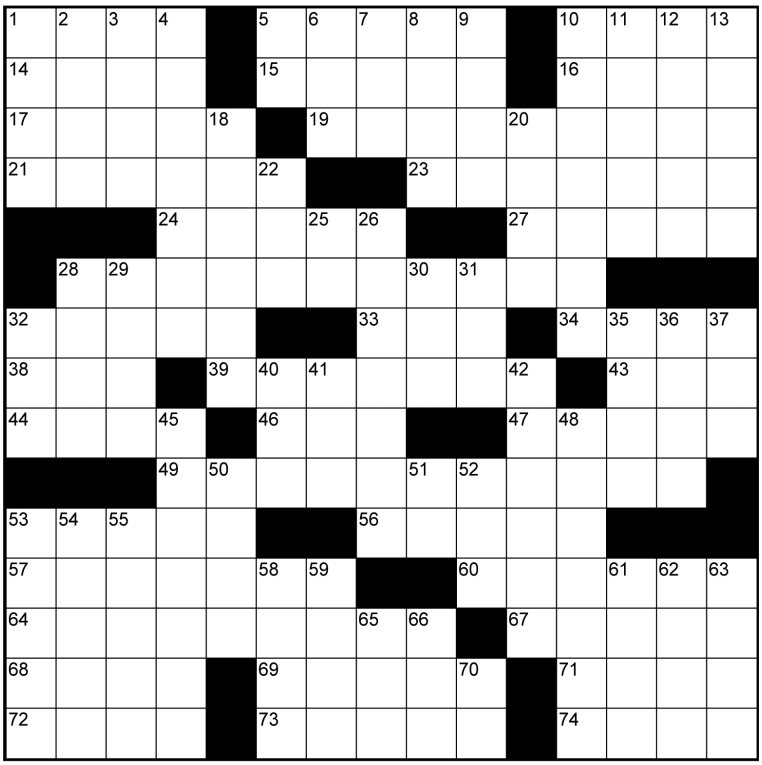
Mr. Cavanaugh joined FME in 1988 as a Programmed Maintenance Technician. As his career advanced, he held positions as Crafts Helper, Industrial Equipment Mechanic, Millwright, and ultimately, the role of Group Leader in the Millwright Shop.

Prior to 1988, Homer had a successful 20-year career with the Pangborn Corporation in Hagerstown, Maryland. Before his business career, he served in the United States Navy. He was a graduate of Smithsburg High School.

Homer Cavanaugh was a valuable member of the FME organization and the NCI-Frederick community. He will be missed.

CD Player

By Frank Blanchard



ACROSS

1. Cultural analogue to a gene
5. What who's on
10. American journalist/author Peter
14. High school subj.
15. An Astaire
16. ___ mater
17. Wear away
19. The theory
21. Stiff
23. Faith action
24. Ta ta
27. Actor Ed
28. The people
32. Genesis tower location
33. Monopoly purchases, in short
34. Scratches out
38. Paris pal
39. Moderately intense exercise
43. "When Will ___ Loved"
44. Our homeland (abbr.)
46. Big snake
47. Leers
49. The context
53. Tagliatelle, for one
56. Any opening in the body
57. Prepared for a match
60. The theorist
64. The natural process
67. ___ Brook University
68. Genealogical diagram
69. Uptight
71. Donned
72. Leaky tire sound
73. "John is ___ friend of mine."
74. Lyric poems

DOWN

1. Track event
2. Tan shade
3. Grassy expanse
4. The final stage of an action
5. Fourth note
6. 30 Down gives it for a clinical trial
7. High idle
8. Unkempt person
9. Brit TV
10. Painter Henri
11. Otherworldly
12. Freeze! Don't make ___
13. More reasonable
18. Phantom images
20. ___ bater
22. Blow off (slang)
25. Gov't construction prerequisite
26. Ados
28. Soccer great Mia
29. Theater award
30. Human subj. oversight committee
31. ___ International (proj. management trainer)
32. Lamb sound
35. Oven for ceramics
36. Online wager?
37. Cong. meeting
40. Herpes family virus (abbr.)
41. Performance measure for an investment (abbr.)
42. Phrase dividers
45. Chases into the branches again
48. Auto acceleration workhorse
50. Drug cop
51. Work after 40 hrs.
52. ___and a wink
53. Attention getters
54. Copiers
55. Business goals
58. Blues singer James
59. Expired
61. Golf club choice
62. In the matter of
63. The science guy, and family
65. The loneliest number
66. CIA peer
70. Where "stat" is shouted

The solution will be published in the next issue

Exploding Lunch Bags May Inspire Science Career?

By Nancy Parrish

Give kids a chance to explode lunch bags, see what a mouse tumor looks like, let a snake crawl up their arms, or hold a human brain in their hands—and it might just inspire them to pursue a career in science.

A survey last year revealed that one employee's daughter had always wanted to be a teacher, but she changed her mind after Take Your Child To Work Day (TYCTWD). Now she wants to be a biologist. "She loved every program. She looks forward [to] attending every year…I couldn't ask for more," said her mother.

TYCTWD is an opportunity for everyone at NCI-Frederick to show children the real world of scientific research, from conducting experiments in a laboratory to designing custom countertops, caring for plants and animals, or using state-of-the-art computer software. For parents, it's a special chance to show your children where you spend your days, and for everyone, it's an opportunity to showcase the broad scope of careers available in both the pursuit and support of science.

New Programs Needed

The TYCTWD Committee is grateful to all participants in previous years and notes that additional programs are needed to keep the event successful.

If you want to participate but don't know where to start, check out the TYCTWD web site, where you'll find descriptions of last year's programs and gallery photos. Then consider what your group can do to support the event.

The TYCTWD Committee will help you every step of the way—from coming up with ideas and planning a

program to providing supplies if you need them. If you prefer, you can offer a hub activity, which takes place in a central location, away from your office or lab.

TYCTWD is July 15. For more information, contact Julie Hartman, 301-846-7338 or hartmanjb@mail.nih.gov, or visit the web site at kidsday.ncifcrf.gov/default.asp.

Take Your Child to Work Day is just one day for us, but it can make the difference of a lifetime to a child.

What Is a Corporate Communications Plan?

By Ken Michaels

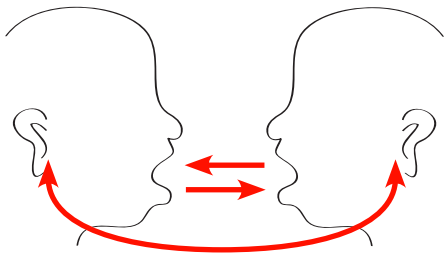
In "Arthur's Corner" (see page 2), Dr. Larry Arthur headlines effective communications as a cornerstone of a successful organization. He also says he has asked the Communications Subcommittee (of the OTS Management Committee) to develop a comprehensive SAIC-Frederick Corporate Communications Plan. Sounds good, but … what's that?

"Communications" is a broad term that includes all written, spoken, and electronic interactions. A communications plan for an organization identifies and commits to writing the following:

- our objectives—what we are trying to accomplish with our communications
- our action plan—specific things we will do to accomplish our objectives
- our audiences—the people to whom our communications will be addressed
- our resources—what we have to work with, according to what timetable and what it will cost
- evaluation—how we will measure results of the program

The SAIC-Frederick Corporate Communications Plan is in its infancy and will likely take some time to develop. Typically, such a plan forecasts projects well into the future—three to five years is not unusual. When completed, the plan will describe specific actions that we will take to address the needs of various constituencies, such as managers and supervisors, on-site staff, off-site staff, NCI, SAIC Corporate, and the general public.

Dr. Arthur has identified the OTS Management Committee as the working group responsible for the quality of our internal communications, and its Subcommittee on Communications will carry the lead in this project. Members of this subcommittee are: Beth Baseler, Frank Blanchard, Andi Gnuschke, Steve Harshman, Amy Huter-Imming, Bill Kopp, Ken Michaels (chairman), and Jill Sugden.



Ideas for how our communications can be improved are always welcome, but especially so at this very early stage of plan development. All of the members of this committee are eager to hear your ideas and suggestions.

The overarching goals of our Communications Plan are to make our organization one that is characterized by:

- a culture of maximum transparency;
- a culture of two-way communication throughout the organization;
- a culture that promotes innovation;
- a culture of consistency in communication; and
- a culture in which managers at all levels promote effective communication.

This is perhaps the most significant value of a companywide communications plan: it defines our communications culture and clarifies our responsibilities.

As you're probably aware, completion of the plan itself will not delay us in taking immediate action. You already know of the establishment of TalkToLarry@mail.nih.gov. Your CEO wants you to know that he is accessible to you, and he wants to hear your ideas directly from you. As this newsletter goes to print, Dr. Arthur is also meeting with SAIC-Frederick's managers and supervisors, all of whom will have vital roles to play in our new culture of improved communication.

Effective communication is a shared responsibility among all of us. A well-informed, well-connected staff is vital to our continued success.

SAIC-Frederick Training Calendar

Communication Series

E-mail Effectiveness	April 23, 12:00–1:00 p.m.
Scientific Writing Workshop	May 11, 13, and 15, 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.
Effective Oral Presentations	May 19 and 26, 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.
Learning to Listen	June 18 (2:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m.)

Management and Supervisory Series

Documentation: An Essential Performance Management Process	May 5, 12:00–1:00 p.m.
Basic Management: Strategies to Boost Employee Performance	May 28, 2:00–5:00 p.m.
Running Effective Meetings	June 11, 2:00–5:00 p.m.
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): What Should You Know as a Manager	June 17, 12:00–1:00 p.m.

Individual and Professional Enrichment Series

Creative Problem Solving	May 6, 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.
Overcoming Burnout	May 20, 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.
Providing Exceptional Customer Service	June 2, 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.
Quality Management	June 9, 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.
Train the Trainer for Instructor-Led Training	June 8 and 22, 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.
Conflict Management	June 24, 1:00–4:00 p.m.

Management Development Program (MDP)

Session 1: Increasing Self-Awareness and Understanding Diversity	April 30, 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
Session 2: Benefits Overview and Compensation	May 7, 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
Session 3: Staffing and Coaching for Managers	May 14, 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
Session 4: Conflict Management and Employee Relations	May 21, 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

All programs are offered at no charge. For additional training opportunities and registration details, contact Sukanya Bora, Training and Development Manager, 301-846-1129 or boras@mail.nih.gov, or go to web.ncifcrf.gov/campus/outreach/course-list.asp

Deadlines

January issue	November 20
April issue	February 20
July issue	May 21
October issue	August 21

Please send your information, articles, or ideas to Maritta Grau, Managing Editor (graump@mail.nih.gov).

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Important Telephone Numbers

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Human Resources Department	**301-846-1146**
SAIC Stock Programs	**1-800-785-7764 or 858-826-4703**
SAIC Stock Recorded Information	**1-888-245-0104**

Dates to Note

Spring Research Festival	**April 29 and 30**
Memorial Day: NCI-Frederick closed	**May 25**
NCI-Frederick closed	**July 3**
Take Your Child to Work Day	**July 15**

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Our Mission

SAIC-Frederick, Inc., under contract to the National Cancer Institute at Frederick, conducts research and development to accelerate the translation of basic research discoveries into products that will advance the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of cancer, infectious diseases, and associated public health concerns.